

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 050320  
ORIGIN NODS-00

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DRAFTED BY S/S:PSEBASTIAN:GJK

APPROVED BY S/S:SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE

S E C R E T STATE 050320

NODIS

CHEROKEE; EYES ONLY FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

FOL RPT SEOUL 1811 ACTION SECSTATE 5 MAR 77 QUOTE

S E C R E T SEOUL 1811

NODIS CHEROKEE

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT PARK'S COMMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: (A) STATE 48043; (B) SEOUL 1132 (STADIS)

SUMMARY. I RELAYED OUR POSITION ON PUBLIC STATEMENTS  
CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS TO PROTOCOL SECRETARY CHOE THIS MORNING  
(MARCH 5). FROM THE EXCHANGE, I BELIEVE IT TO BE ESSENTIAL  
THAT WE CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS IT PERTAINS  
TO KOREA. END SUMMARY.

1. AS INSTRUCTED IN REF A, I MET WITH PROTOCOL SECRETARY  
CHOE KWANG SOO THIS MORNING (MARCH 5) AND COVERED WITH HIM

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THE MESSAGE THAT WE WISH TO BE RELAYED TO PRESIDENT PARK.  
HE LISTENED CAREFULLY AND TOOK FULL NOTES.

2. IN RESPONSE CHOE EMPHASIZED THAT IN PARK'S VIEW,  
THERE WERE NO HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS IN KOREA BECAUSE  
ALL THOSE WHO HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO TRIAL HERE WERE  
CHARGED WITH A VIOLATION OF LAW. THOSE LAWS WERE APPROVED

BY AN ELECTED ASSEMBLY AND WERE BASED ON A CONSTITUTION WHICH HAD BEEN APPROVED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE KOREAN CITIZENS. CHOE THEN ASKED, "IS THIS NOT DEMOCRACY?"

3. CHOE THEN WENT ON TO STATE THAT, SINCE THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS WERE APPROVED IN A DEMOCRATIC FASHION AND SINCE ALL VIOLATORS OF THOSE LAWS WERE TRIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH DUE PROCESS, THEN PRESIDENT PARK WOULD FIND IT INCOMPREHENSIBLE IF THE ADMINISTRATION CRITICIZED HIM FOR VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. PRESIDENT PARK COULD UNDERSTAND IF UNINFORMED GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES MIGHT PRESENT AN UNBALANCED PICTURE, BUT THAT IT WOULD BE EMBARRASSING IF THE ADMINISTRATION SPOKE OUT.

4. WE THEN WENT ON TO A DISCUSSION OF THE DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WITH CHOE ASKING ME WHAT I UNDERSTOOD TO BE THE KEY ISSUES. I TOLD HIM THAT MY PERSONAL VIEW WAS THAT WE WOULD JUDGE PROBLEMS BY SUCH CRITERIA AS BY FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, DUE PROCESS AND UNWARRANTED IMPRISONMENTS, ILLUSTRATING THESE POINTS WITH EXAMPLES SUCH AS KIM TAE JUNG AND THE MOST RECENT MARCH ONE EPISODES. I ALSO SUGGESTED THAT SOME PROGRAM LEADING TO IDEAL CONDITIONS MIGHT BE HELPFUL. (COMMENT: THIS SUGGESTION STEMMED FROM A PREVIOUS CONVERSATION I HAD WITH CHOE IN WHICH HE HAD VOLUNTEERED THAT THERE WAS CURRENTLY A GAP BETWEEN THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE IDEAL SITUATION.)

5. HIS RESPONSE, OF COURSE, WAS TO REEMPHASIZE THAT ALL  
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ACTIONS TAKEN WERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ESTABLISHED LAW. HE RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHAT PRESIDENT CARTER MEANT WHEN HE STATED THAT HIS CONCERNS WERE NOT DIRECTED TOWARD THE REORDERING OF POLITICAL STRUCTURES. I TOLD CHOE THAT WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN HOW A GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED ITSELF, BUT THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN HOW IT DEALT WITH ITS INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS.

6. COMMENT: IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT PARK HOPES THAT HIS POSITION THAT NO HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS EXISTED IN KOREA WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND THAT THEREFORE NO PUBLIC COMMENTS WOULD BE REQUIRED. IN LIGHT OF THE PREVIOUS PARK-AMBASSADOR-VESSEY MEETING AND MY SESSION THIS MORNING, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ROKG HAS ANY REASON TO ASSUME THAT WE WOULD NOT MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, WHEN APPROPRIATE. THE AMBASSADOR CAN DESCRIBE MORE PRECISELY THE DEPTH OF PRESIDENT PARK'S FEELINGS ON THIS ISSUE.

7. THIS CONVERSATION, IN ADDITION TO A NUMBER OF OTHERS  
I HAVE HAD THIS PAST WEEK, FURTHER SUPPORTS THE

SUGGESTION THAT THE AMBASSADOR MADE IN REF B IN WHICH  
HE SAID, "AS A FIRST STEP, WE SHOULD CLARIFY IN OUR OWN MINDS  
THE DEFINITION OF 'HUMAN RIGHTS' AS IT PERTAINS TO  
KOREA." I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT IF WE ARE TO HAVE  
A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE WITH THE ROK, TO DEFINE AS PRECISELY  
AS POSSIBLE WHAT OUR CRITERIA WILL BE AGAINST WHICH WE  
WILL JUDGE THE ADEQUACY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES  
HERE IN KOREA. SINCE THE ROK INSISTS THAT DUE PROCESS  
IS BEING FOLLOWED STRICTLY BASED ON LAWS APPROVED BY  
AN ELECTED ASSEMBLY, WE NEED TO FOCUS ON THE QUESTION OF WHICH  
LAWS WE FIND DISTASTEFUL AND WHAT CHANGES WE WOULD EXPECT  
EITHER IN THE SHORT OR LONG TERM WHICH WOULD SATISFY OUR  
HUMAN RIGHTS OBJECTIVES. CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO  
A FURTHER PRIVATE COMMUNICATION WITH PRESIDENT PARK WHICH WILL  
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SPELL OUT OUR POSITION. THIS SUGGESTION HAS NOT BEEN DISCUSSED  
WITH AMBASSADOR.  
STERN

UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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